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And if we do, we care about children.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the time. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I thank him for his participation.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the welfare provisions contained in the Contract With America, and to express the fears my constituents have communicated to me about cuts to nutrition assistance programs. I would also like to thank Congresswoman CLAYTON for organizing this debate.

The Contract With America would transfer control over Federal programs which provide a safety net to poor children to the States, while at the same time transferring only a portion of the money needed to provide these vital services. Many programs would suffer under this proposal, including those which provide protective services to abused children, those which provide child care assistance to the working poor, and those which provide nutrition assistance to the undernourished.

Approximately 13 percent of the children in Minnesota live below the poverty line, and it is estimated that 160,000 children go hungry as a result. Children who do not receive nutritious meals suffer from poor health and diminished performance in school. I have fought to support successful programs like the National School Lunch Program and the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children [WIC] which were created to combat childhood hunger and give young people the opportunity to succeed.

One woman living in Minneapolis recently wrote me that the National School Lunch Program has served as a last line of defense for her family against hunger. Since her husband left, she has had difficulty making ends meet. Nevertheless, she can be confident that her two young daughters will receive at least one carton of milk and one nutritious meal a day when we cannot afford to purchase these items.

This family's experience demonstrates the need for a reliable safety net. Nutrition assistance programs like these have represented our nation's acceptance of the basic responsibility we have to care for our children.

The welfare provisions contained in the Contract With America represent a fundamental shift in our Nation's policy toward young people. The contract asserts that we, as a nation, should abdicate responsibility for providing basic protective services, basic support services, and basic nutrition to children in need.

Those who support the contract would have us believe these proposals were crafted in the name of reducing bureaucracy. I am not deceived by such rhetoric. One Federal bureaucracy would be replaced by 50 State bureaucracies. The only thing that would really be reduced is a child's access to a healthy meal.

My home State, Minnesota, is expected to lose \$18 million in Federal nutrition funding under the welfare provisions included in the Contract With America. This is a daunting sum of money for a State which already faces a hunger problem. Currently, 1 in every 16 Minnesotans seeks help from food shelves, receiving an annual total of 4 million pounds of food. For example, Minnesota FoodShare, an organization which provides food to needy families throughout the State, would have to

dramatically increase their efforts. They would have to generate 17.6 million more pounds of food, or six times the amount of current contributions, to compensate for these lost Federal funds. Clearly, Minnesotans would suffer if these welfare provisions are adopted.

True welfare reform does not destroy a child's safety net. Rather, it makes it possible for families to become self-sufficient. Full-time workers should be able to provide food, shelter, and the basic necessities for their families without being forced to turn to the Federal Government. I have proposed raising the minimum wage by 50 percent to \$6.50 an hour. Individuals can only move away from public assistance programs once they are empowered to help themselves. I believe increasing the minimum wage is a key element of any welfare reform.

I strongly urge my colleagues to reject the welfare provisions contained in the Contract With America.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the Republican proposal to end the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, better known as WIC.

Since its inception, WIC has been a model nutrition and food program. For infants, WIC reduces low-birth weights and lowers infant mortality rates by 25–66 percent among Medicaid beneficiaries. For children, WIC increases readiness to learn, improves diets and increases rates of immunization against childhood disease. For women, it significantly increases access to adequate prenatal care and improves their dietary intake.

Study after study has proven that WIC is not only successful in achieving its goals of good nutrition and health for children, but is also cost-effective. Every dollar spent on pregnant women in WIC saves up to \$4 in Medicaid for newborns and their mothers. For every very low birthweight prevented, Medicaid costs were reduced on average from \$12,000 to \$15,000. The only problem WIC has faced over the years is that it has always been underfunded. Doesn't it make more sense to invest in preventive programs to keep women and their kids healthy than to spend thousands later to keep a premature baby alive because it lacked the care it needed early on?

If WIC is block granted, my own State stands to lose \$2.7 million in Federal funding for WIC—which translates into approximately 5,200 women and children being denied WIC services. This will mean local WIC programs will be forced to turn away nutritionally at-risk children and postpartum women. More children will be denied food and health care so that our wealthiest Americans can get a tax break. It's becoming clearer to me who the Republicans made their contract with and where their priorities are.

In my own district, I know first hand how successful WIC has been and how it has helped countless families stay healthy. I know of a young mother of five in Taunton, MA, named Dorothy who is not on welfare, receives WIC so that she can feed her family. If this small investment is denied, she and her family will suffer immeasurably.

Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the need to get our Nation's finances in order and I intend to work with our new leadership to try to achieve this noble goal. But, I would respectfully suggest that keeping our kids and young mothers well fed and healthy is an infinitely

wiser investment for our country than this star wars weapons fantasy—which unfortunately seems to be making an expensive comeback.

I would urge my colleagues to show a little forethought and little heart, as we decide the fate of our country's most precious resource—our children.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHUGH). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There is no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MOAKLEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. Kaptur] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE REPUBLICAN NUTRITION PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. CHAMBLISS] is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I have with me today, tonight, my colleague from the 10th District of Georgia, Mr. NORWOOD, and also my distinguished colleague from the First District of Georgia, Mr. KINGSTON.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON].

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman. You know, it is too bad, after listening to all the last hour, the people of America had to listen to, and I am sure no one is watching C-SPAN right now, and we cannot respond. I also will point out to the viewers back home that we had a room full of Democrats in here about 30 minutes ago, now they are all gone, now that we have some floor time to talk about some of their ridiculous and absurd bellyaching about protecting bureaucrats.

All we know is that we are going to cut programs to cut out bureaucracy, and all the whining and gnashing of teeth over here to protect bureaucracies, and you know, as you listen to it, everything works. Every program is a good one, and everyone is efficient, and it is saving America, and it is doing this, it is doing that. Why, if we